

THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

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We live in times of great uncertainty and immense choice. Even when it feels as if we are stuck with no alternatives, there is always the choice of how to deal with the situation you are in.

One of these choices is always what we hold onto and what we let go of.

Ask yourself '**what am I holding onto that I don't need**'? Is it a bad feeling towards someone that is weighing me down that needs to be worked through and then let go of? Is it a sense of being ugly, fat, unworthy, less than or something on that theme that started way back, but has no place in the present? Is it a cupboard full of clothes that I don't wear anymore or a shelf full of books that I have read and will never open again? Are these maybe things that take up emotional or physical space and that you may be better off without.

We all know that it can be too difficult to let go of old feelings or mind programs that have been with us forever. In fact maybe they have become so much part of you that it will feel like amputating an arm or a leg to part with them.

Or maybe you would be relieving yourself of a heavy burden. These choices create dilemmas. We often hear of someone saying that if they forgave the person who did them a terrible wrong that it would make the deeds of that other person seem right; that the other person would then get off scot free.

Not so really. We all make mistakes. We are all burdened with the shadow side of selfishness, stubbornness and unkindness in some form or another even if it is not always our intent. We all do the best we can but sometimes it falls very short of the ideal. Forgiveness is not for the other person. It is for you. It is to relieve you and if necessary to release you of the negative bond that ties you to this person and what they have done to harm or aggrieve you. It is also for those around you whom you love and who may be affected by what you are holding on to.

Forgiveness or letting go is not a head thing. It involves the end stage of a process of coming to terms with what it is you are upset or angry or grieving about. That may involve loss, betrayal or abuse. It involves the end point of an emotional process in which you start off with the intent to work towards setting yourself free of whatever it is that you are feeling, how it is affecting your life and contaminating your feelings.

This is not always easy and you may not always be able to do it alone. It may not be quick. However the starting point is always the intention that there is no long term value for you to hold on to something that drains you of energy. Suggesting that you work through a process of releasing it does not devalue your experiences or make them any less painful or difficult. Neither does it suggest that you sweep them under the carpet or pretend that nothing happened. It does not even suggest that you let the persons involved know that you have come to this decision. But maybe you can never imagine forgiving this person. This is also okay.

Maybe in that case, there is something that you can forgive yourself for. Let something go that you have been holding onto that you regret or cannot come to terms with in your own life. Some actions or decisions of yours that you believe have had a negative impact on your life. Possibly this is a good place to start, to find a way to let go of what you hold against yourself, before you can even think of starting to work on your hardships against others.

Either way, start to look around you. In your outer physical environment; what clutter do you not want to take forward with you. In your inner world; what baggage is taking up space and energy that can be used to birth new ideas and plans? And who is it possible to consider forgiving, so that you can release yourself of old resentments that hold you back.